

SPRÜTH MAGERS

Stephen Prina

galesburg, illinois+

Sprüth Magers, Los Angeles

May 12 – August 11, 2018

The work of artist and musician Stephen Prina has moved nimbly between painting, sculpture, photography, installation and conceptual practices since the late 1970s. Impossible to categorize within any one medium or approach, his projects mine art historical references, personal biography, musical compositions, and institutional and cultural histories, which he spins into bodies of work that function as complex networks of objects and information. Sprüth Magers is pleased to announce its first exhibition with Prina, the fourth iteration of his wide-ranging project *galesburg, illinois+*, on view at the Los Angeles gallery May 12 to August 11, 2018. The artist will also present a public performance at the gallery on Saturday, July 14, 2018, at 7pm.

During 1977–78, I sang and played guitar with Jeannie and The Alladins at Harbor Lights Supper Club, Galesburg, Illinois, with the interest of making a move to California to pursue a graduate degree. In December 1979, having accomplished my goal of enrolling at California Institute of the Arts the year before, I scraped the funds together to visit New York City for the first time. Standing in line at The Dance Theater Workshop with Laurie Anderson, for whom I played piano in a workshop she conducted at CalArts, for a work-in-progress performance of Perfect Lives (Private Parts), a video/opera by Robert Ashley, commissioned by The Kitchen, I was convinced I had severed ties with my small-town, Midwestern roots, once and for all. After the audience filed into the theater, the lights came down and a grid of video monitors was fired up. Lo and behold, one of the images on a monitor was of Harbor Lights Supper Club, the façade of which, at least, served as “The Bar,” bringing me back, full circle, to a past I thought I had circumvented. This image, however, has been edited out of the BBC 1984 broadcast and subsequent versions of this work.

Et cetera.

and

While in high school, I played guitar with Joe Padilla & Company at Taco Hideout Lounge, Galesburg, Illinois. One night, a large group of people arrived for dinner. I recognized a few of them as being associated with Knox College. A week later, while working at my father’s grocery store, a woman approached me to compliment me on my performance, indicating that she had been part of the group from Knox. She informed me that the dinner was in honor of John Cage while he had been a visiting artist at the college. Having recently started singing lead vocals with the band I would like to think that I have sung “It’s Too Late” by Carole King to John Cage that evening.

Et cetera.

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Stephen Prina (*1954, Galesburg, Illinois) lives and works in Los Angeles, California and Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he is Professor, Department of the Visual and Environmental Studies, Harvard University. Solo exhibitions include Museo Madre, Naples, Italy (2017); Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve (2016); Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Sankt Gallen (2015); Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2013); Vienna Secession, Vienna; Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (2011); Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2010); Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Seville; Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (2008); Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main (2000); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (1992); The Renaissance Society and the University of Chicago (1989). Group exhibitions (selection): Mumok, Vienna; Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2015/2016); The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2014); Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2013); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012); Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2012); Whitney Biennial, New York (2008); Documenta IX, Kassel; Museum of Modern Art, New York (1992); Carnegie International, Pittsburgh (1991); Venice Biennial (1990).

For further information and press enquiries, please contact Claire Rifelj (claire@spruethmagers.com).

Public reception: Friday, May 11, 2018, 6 – 8pm

Public performance: Saturday, July 14, 2018, 7pm

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm